



**Issue 34 – 35 (2007)**  
**August 17 – 30, 2007**  
**Part 1: News Analysis**

***This issue covers a two-week period. The Turkmenistan News Brief will return to its regular weekly format in the next issue. – Editor***

The government of Turkmenistan has made human rights a greater preoccupation than ever in the last two weeks, receiving an unprecedented number of human rights-related delegations in Ashgabat and announcing the establishment of an interagency commission to ensure Turkmenistan's compliance with its international human rights obligations. It remains to be seen how the expanded dialogue and structural adjustments will translate into deterrence of abuse and remedies for human rights violations on the ground.

President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov signaled his continuing interest in promoting ties with the Arab world – his first trip as head of state was to Saudi Arabia -- by leading a large delegation to the United Arab Emirates this week. The bilateral agenda ranged from energy to agriculture, health care and banking, and resulted in public pledges to cooperate in the fight against terrorism and drug-smuggling and to create an intergovernmental commission to promote energy investment and other projects. The UAE president gave Turkmenistan a gift of US \$50 million to sustain an existing cultural center and resort, and it was announced that a Turkmen Information Center will be opened in Abu Dhabi to promote Arab investment in Turkmenistan.

Following on visits from two U.S. Congressional delegations concerned among other issues with human rights in Turkmenistan, President Berdymukhamedov announced the establishment of an interagency commission to ensure Turkmenistan's compliance with international rights agreements. The prospect was held out that Turkmenistan may accede to rights treaties not yet signed, and that further submission of reports to treaty bodies, with technical assistance from UNDP, is now under way. Foreign Minister Rashit Meredov met with the UN's regional representative from the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights to discuss the new compliance commission, which is also to work toward harmonizing domestic legislation with international human rights norms.

State media gave prominent, positive coverage to the unprecedented visit of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (US CIRF) to Turkmenistan August 18-25. Television viewers witnessed the delegates' meeting with Nasrulla ibn Ibadulla, a former chief Islamic cleric whose release from prison around August 11 the US CIRF had long advocated. Ibn Ibadulla, who served four of a 22-year sentence, was seen working as an advisor to the state's Religious Affairs Council and telling delegates that "For me, Turkmenistan is a home of flourishing democracy where the human rights are protected reliably." State media also selectively covered comments from the chairman of the Commission, Michael Cromartie, about religious dialogue and ostensibly having "similar views" on many issues of religious freedom. Not covered, however, were the delegation's own more circumspect statement and comments to foreign reporters that Turkmenistan "still had a long way to go" and that the U.S. experts were concerned about the testimonies they had heard from victims of religious persecution in Turkmenistan. The US CIRF has for years advocated that Turkmenistan be declared a "country of particular concern" under a US statute, which would open the door to possible US sanctions against Turkmenistan. The Commission is planning to release a report on the findings of its trip later this year.

In a surprise move toward instituting budget transparency, ITAR-TASS reported this week that the president had ordered that all state budgets be published in the mass media and that a High Audit Chamber had been established to provide oversight separate from the president's office. In July President Berdymukhamedov had ordered a review of the notorious off-budget accounts held by the International Saparmurat Niyazov Fund. And Turkmenistan.ru reported that some 500 more students than last year would receive a higher education, and that secondary schools are to receive 12,000 new computers in the new school year. But it also reported that only 267 students would be allowed to study abroad this year. The Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights noted this week that schools would continue the "turkmenification" of public education by enforcing rules that all students, regardless of their ethnicity, wear traditional Turkmen national dress to school and that portraits of Niyazov continue to grace school walls.

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# 1. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## a. UAE, Turkmenistan Back War on Terror

**Original title:** UAE, Turkmenistan Back War on Terror. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.

**Source:** Khaleej Times Online/08/28/07

**Full version:**

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/theuae/2007/August/theuae\\_August794.xml&section=theuae&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/theuae/2007/August/theuae_August794.xml&section=theuae&col=)

At the close of a two-day state visit by President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov to the United Arab Emirates, a joint communique was released by the Turkmen leader and the UAE president, His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, pledging to cooperate and "back international efforts to fight terrorism, narcotics and organized crime," *Khaleej Times Online* reported.

The two leaders discussed improvement of bilateral relations in the political, economic, commercial, cultural and social spheres but also talked about the global issues of settling disputes through peaceful means, non-interference in other countries' internal affairs and making the Middle East and the Gulf free of all weapons of mass destruction. President Shaikh Khalifa expressed support for Turkmenistan's policy of "neutrality" as vital for regional security. The two presidents also called for more cooperation in construction and transport, and pledged to exchange experts in agriculture, architecture, culture, arts, tourism and sports. A joint ministerial committee was formed, to be chaired by the two countries' foreign ministers. The two nations also agreed to exempt holders of diplomatic passports in both countries from entry visa requirements, the communique stated.

## b. Turkmenistan, UAE Discuss Further Cooperation, Regional Stabilization

**Original title:** Joint Communique of Turkmenistan and United Arab Emirates. Excerpt prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.

**Source:** Official Turkmen Government website/08/27/07

**Full version:** <http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/?idr=1&id=070827b>

Excerpt: On August 26-27, 2007, which corresponds to the 13-14th month of Shaaban of the 1428th year of the Muslim calendar, upon the invitation of President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates, His Excellency President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov of Turkmenistan made an official visit to the United Arab Emirates. Brotherly talks were held between His Excellency the President of Turkmenistan and His Highness United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, which took place in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding and were directed at strengthening mutual relations and their development in all spheres, including political, economic, and socio-cultural, and also regional and international issues. In the area of bilateral relations, the sides agreed to increase trade between the two states and mutual investments, especially in the oil and gas and petroleum refinement and chemical sectors.

[Passages omitted on memoranda of understanding.]

The presidents also emphasized the important of development cooperation in such areas as trade, construction, transportation and communications and also the importance of exchanging experience in agriculture, architecture and other spheres of mutual interest. The sides signed a number of bilateral documents on cooperation:

- 1) an agreement between the Government of Turkmenistan and the Government of the United Arab Emirates on cooperation in the area of culture;
- 2) a memorandum between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates on consultations between the foreign policy departments of both countries.

The sides agreed:

- to create a join intergovernmental commission between both countries which would be headed by the foreign ministers of each side;
- to exempt citizens with diplomatic passports from visa requirements on the territories of both countries and to exchange official notes in this regard.

[Passages omitted on Central Asian and Gulf stability and the need to remove weapons of mass destruction and on the importance of Turkmenistan's neutrality and the UAE president's peace and security policies.]

The presidents of both countries noted the important of supporting the efforts of the international community in the struggle against terrorism, unlawful narcotics trade and organized crime

[Passages omitted on visit of UAE president to Turkmenistan and appreciation of his hospitality.]

### **c. Turkmenistan Establishes Commission on Compliance with International Human Rights Obligations**

**Original title:** *Turkmenistan Sets Up Commission to Ensure Its Compliance with International Obligations in Human Rights. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.*

**Source:** [turkmenistan.ru/08/25/07](http://turkmenistan.ru/08/25/07)

**Full version:** [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10865&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10865&type=event&sort=date_desc)

Synopsis: At a Cabinet of Ministers meeting August 24, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Rashit Meredov reported on implementation of some 100 international conventions to which Turkmenistan acceded since independence, [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported. A Preventative Diplomacy Center will be opened with UN support in Ashgabat.

At the meeting, President Berdymukhamedov signed a decree to establish an inter-departmental commission on ensuring Turkmenistan's compliance with international human rights obligations.

### **d. Turkmen Foreign Minister Meets with UN Human Rights Official**

**Original title:** *Turkmenistan-UN: Cooperation in the Name of People. Translation and excerpt prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.*

**Source:** Official Turkmen Government website/08/28/07

**Full version:** <http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/?idr=1&id=070828b>

Excerpt: Matilda Bogner, regional coordinator for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, visited Ashgabat, the Turkmen government website reported, citing the State News Agency (TDH). She was received August 28 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where a substantive discussion took place on the prospects for cooperation with the UN in the highly important sphere of protecting human rights and liberties. Richard Young, permanent coordinator of the UN in Turkmenistan, also took part in the meeting. The guests highly appreciated the recent decision of President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov to create an interagency commission to implement Turkmenistan's international obligations in the area of human rights, which was established by a special decree of the head of state.

[Passage omitted on cooperation]. Currently, Turkmenistan, together with UNDP, is successfully implementing a project in the area of human rights protection, to be reflected in national reports submitted to the various UN committees. Turkmenistan has already submitted three national reports, including on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Now preparation is under way for a report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

[Passage omitted on cooperation]. The guests noted the enormous personal contribution of President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov who has successfully implemented a policy based on the principles of democracy, humanism, kindness and justice. As noted, displaying persistence in resolving the humanitarian problems facing society, the Turkmen leader is consistently and firmly undertaking practical steps in this direction, a vivid confirmation of which is the recent act of pardoning 11 citizens of Turkmenistan. [Passages omitted on integrating international norms with domestic Turkmen legislation, promotion of Turkmenistan's accession to other international rights agreements, and the important role the interagency commission can play in Turkmenistan's democratization.]

## **e. U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Finishes Visit to Turkmenistan**

**Original title:** *U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Finishes its Visit to Turkmenistan.*

**Source:** *U.S. Embassy—Ashgabat Press Release/08/24/07.*

Members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, led by Chairman Michael Cromartie, concluded their five-day official visit to Turkmenistan. The delegation arrived in Turkmenistan on August 19 for a fact-finding mission to learn more about religious freedom, treatment of religious minorities, and the overall human rights situation in Turkmenistan. On August 20, the delegation met with Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov. Other meetings included the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Culture and Broadcasting, Education, Justice, as well as a meeting at Turkmenistan's Parliament (Mejlis).

Near the end of the week-long visit, Chairman Cromartie stated that the commission had "been greeted warmly by the Turkmen government and both sides have engaged in frank exchanges regarding the state of religious freedom in this country. We have also met with members of Turkmenistan's minority religious communities and were concerned by the testimonials we heard. (...) Our meetings with government officials have been constructive, and we hope their commitment to progress is genuine." Commissioner Donald Argue added, "If the commission did not believe in hope, we would not be here. There are some encouraging signs, but there is still a long way to go. We hope the Turkmen government will fully embrace its religious freedom obligations under the Turkmen Constitution and international human rights law."

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is an independent, bipartisan U.S. government agency that was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of the U.S. Congress in 1998 to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and the U.S. Congress.

## **f. Pardoned Turkmen Cleric Meets US Religious Commission**

**Original Title:** *Pardoned Turkmen Cleric Meets US Religious Commission. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project*

**Source:** *TV Altyn Asyr/08/22/07*

**Synopsis:** Representatives of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom were received August 22 at the Council on Religious Affairs under the president of Turkmenistan, TV Altyn Asyr reported.

The two sides discussed the issues of ensuring the right of citizens to freedom of belief and the establishment of effective bilateral relations. The visitors were briefed on the peaceful coexistence of various religious confessions in Turkmenistan. Nasrulla ibn Ibadulla, a former prisoner who has now resumed his work at the Council on Religious Affairs, told the visitors about the humane aspects of President Berdymukhamedov's policy.

"For me, Turkmenistan is a home of flourishing democracy where human rights are protected reliably. It is a policy aimed at achieving such goals, which has made it possible for me to resume my work here, at my previous work place," Ibn Ibadulla said.

## **g. U.S. Commission Examines Status of Religious Liberty in Turkmenistan**

**Original Title:** *USCIRF Delegation Travels to Turkmenistan to Assess Religious Freedom Conditions. Excerpt prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.*

**Source:** *USCIRF Press Release/08/28/07*

**Excerpt:** A delegation from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom traveled to Turkmenistan on Aug. 18-25 to assess conditions for religious freedom. USCIRF Chair Michael Cromartie and Commissioners Donald Argue and Imam Talal Eid comprised the delegation. The Commission delegation met with government officials as part of its effort to examine the state of protections for human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, under the new government of President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov.

[Passage omitted on advocacy of Turkmenistan's designation by U.S. as Country of Particular Concern for human rights violations.]

Under Niyazov, virtually no independent religious activity was allowed and severe government restrictions left most religious activity under strict—and often arbitrary—state control. In addition, Niyazov's personality cult became a quasi-religion to which the population of Turkmenistan was forced to adhere. His government ordered that Niyazov's two-volume work of "spiritual thoughts," called Ruhnama, be given equal prominence to the Koran and the Bible in mosques and churches. [Passage omitted on restrictive 2003 religion law.]

The new president, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, has initiated some changes, including the release, just prior to the Commission's trip, of 11 prisoners of conscience including the country's former chief mufti, Nasrullah ibn Ibadullah. The Commission delegation traveled to Turkmenistan in part to ascertain whether these changes have made a significant difference in protections for human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, and whether further changes will be undertaken in the near future.

[Passage omitted on meetings with officials.]

#### **h. U.S. Commission Has "Open and Constructive Discussion" in Turkmenistan**

**Original Title:** *Turkmen President Responds to Questions of American Human Rights Mission. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project*

**Source:** [turkmen.ru/08/21/07](http://turkmen.ru/08/21/07)

**Full version:** [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10827&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10827&type=event&sort=date_desc)

**Synopsis:** On August 20, President Berdymukhamedov received Michael Cromartie, chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and his colleagues, and U.S. charge d'affaires in Turkmenistan, Richard Hoagland, the State News Agency (TDH) and [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported. The two sides exchanged views, stressing "the importance of the dialogue of religions as an integral factor of mutual understanding and accord among nations in the contemporary world."

The American visitors expressed appreciation for reforms taking place in Turkmenistan, including the pardoning of 11 citizens sentenced to imprisonment. The U.S. delegation presented a gift of books to the Turkmen leader, including a book displaying a Turkmen carpet exhibit in the U.S. earlier this year. "We had an open and constructive discussion. The Turkmen leader provided answers to all questions of the American side. We have similar views on many of them," Cromartie was quoted as saying in an interview with TDH.

#### **i. U.S. Observers Encouraged by Signs in Turkmenistan**

**Original Title:** *U.S. Observers See Encouraging Signs in Turkmenistan. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project*

**Source:** Reuters/08/24/07

**Full version:** <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL2481709520070824?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>

**Synopsis:** Members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom said they had seen improvements in how Turkmenistan is handling human rights and that the long-isolated nation was now trying to open itself up, Reuters reported. Still the group issued a statement saying they were "concerned" about some of the testimonies they had heard from minority religious groups. "There are some encouraging signs, but there is still a long way to go," commission member Donald Argue was quoted as saying in the statement.

In July, Amnesty International urged Turkmenistan to lift suspended sentences of Jehovah's Witnesses who had been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the army due to conscientious objection. Before the U.S. commission's arrival, a Muslim cleric was released from prison and given a position in a Turkmen government commission overseeing religious affairs.

#### **j. U.S. Congressional House International Affairs Delegation Visits Turkmenistan**

**Original Title:** *Visit of American Congressmen. Translation prepared by the OSI Turkmenistan Project.*

**Source:** Official Turkmenistan Government website/08/23/07

**Full version:** <http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/?idr=1&id=070823b>



A delegation from the U.S. Congressional House International Affairs Committee visited Ashgabat for two days, the Turkmen Government website reported, citing the State News Agency (TDH). The guests were received August 23 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Talks were also held at the ministries of the oil and gas industry and mineral resources, economy and finance, and agriculture.

Noting the enormous potential for bilateral cooperation and expressing an abundant interest in establishing a full-scale intergovernmental dialogue, the two sides discussed a broad range of issues for bilateral cooperation, and also international and region issues of mutual interest.

The delegation also met with the Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan and the Ministry of Health and the Pharmaceutical Industry. In addition, the members of the American delegation planned to take part in a "round table" with specialists from the Higher Council on Science and Technology under the President of Turkmenistan, and also executives of the national mass media.

## **2. DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS**

### **a. Government Spending to be Published in Turkmenistan**

*Original title:* Budget Spending to be Published in Turkmenistan. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

*Source:* ITAR-TASS/08/24/07

Synopsis: For the first time, accounts of budgetary expenditures will be published in the mass media in Turkmenistan, the Russian news service ITAR-TASS reported. The Supreme Audit Chamber was recently established by order of President Berdymukhamedov to prepare such reports directly to him. The audit authority will undertake financial and economic oversight throughout Turkmenistan, the State News Agency reported. The president has urged that issues like "double bookkeeping" be examined, and that all ministries, departments and organizations be checked. Any findings of wrongdoing will be sent to law-enforcement agencies. Initial audits have revealed serious violations in the use of capital investment by several ministries and their chiefs have been fired, ITAR-TASS reported.

The official U.S. dollar exchange rate has remain unchanged since 1998 and free conversion banned; this has resulted in a black market of dollars.

### **b. More Students to Start University Studies in Fall; Secondary Schools to Get Computers**

*Original title:* 3715 First Year Students to Start Studies in Turkmen High Schools September 1.

*Original title:* Turkmenistan to Buy 12 Thousand Hewlett-Packard Personal Computers for Secondary Schools. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

*Synopsis and translation prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project*

*Source:* [turkmenistan.ru/08/24/07,08/25/07](http://turkmenistan.ru/08/24/07,08/25/07)

*Full Version:* [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10866&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10866&type=event&sort=date_desc)

Synopsis: Vice Premier Khydyr Saparliev reported that 3,715 students are expected to begin their first year of university education on September 1, [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported. This represents an increase by 540 students compared to last year. In addition, 1,618 students will begin classes at vocational schools, and 267 Turkmen will leave to study abroad in foreign schools.

The Ministry of Education will purchase more than 12,000 computers to distribute among Ashgabat and provincial secondary schools, [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported. Computer Iner Tekeri, an authorized dealer of Hewlett Packard, will install the new computers with Pentium 4 duo-core processors in classrooms and connect them to local wireless networks. Students will also receive printers, software and anti-virus programs. The company also plans to train 1,200 secondary school teachers to use the computers.

### **c. Turkmen National Dress to Be Enforced as School Uniform**

*Original title:* Turkmenistan Gets Ready for the New Academic Year. Synopsis and translation prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

*Source:* Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights/08/16/07

*Full version:* <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?0255043285000000000000011000000>

**Synopsis:** With only a few weeks away from the beginning of the school year, the Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR) has published a report on its website indicating that substantive educational reforms are still not underway, and the government appears to be focusing on superficial issues, TIHR reported. Both students and teachers have been ordered to come to school in traditional Turkmen dress, although it is not clear yet whether the verbal instructions originate from the national Ministry of Education or the Dashoguz Province Department of Education. Ethnic Russians are annoyed that they must put on clothing to which they are not accustomed, and one principal was reported as selling fabric for the uniforms and urging parents to buy from him at a higher price.

There has also been confusion over new textbooks, as harried local officials first removed the portraits of Saparmurat Niyazov, the first president of Turkmenistan, and replaced them with the image of the current president, Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov, but then were chastised by Berdimukhamedov and ordered to put Niyazov's picture back. Although innovative teaching reforms have been promised, they are not yet in evidence.

#### **d. President Plans to Light up Sky Over Ashgabat**

**Original title:** *President Orders to Develop Concept of Night Illumination of Ashgabat.* Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

**Source:** [turkmenistan.ru/08/19/07](http://turkmenistan.ru/08/19/07)

**Full version:** [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10812&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10812&type=event&sort=date_desc)

**Synopsis:** At an expanded meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers August 17, President Berdimukhamedov ordered Ashgabat Mayor Deryageldi Orazov and the Ministry of Power Engineering and Industry to develop a concept for Ashgabat's night illumination. After studying a number of new construction projects, he outlined the importance of a comprehensive approach to lighting.

"Illumination is a continuation of architecture that forms the city's appearance at night and creates a feeling of harmony, beauty and comfort," [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported the president as saying. "Therefore, it is so important to approach solving this issue seriously," said the president, stressing that it was important "to think through thoroughly all details from both the practical and esthetic points of view." The president also urged that the landscaping around the buildings be studied more closely to reduce the inconveniences created by numerous construction sites, and to ensure cleanliness and order in the city.

### **3. ECONOMIC NEWS**

#### **a. UAE and Turkmenistan Discuss Joint Ventures**

**Original title:** *UAE and Turkmenistan Discuss Joint Ventures.* Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

**Source:** *Khaleej Times Online/08/27/07*

**Full version:**

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/business/2007/August/business\\_August546.xml&section=business&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/business/2007/August/business_August546.xml&section=business&col=)

**Synopsis:** At a summit of the presidents of the United Arab Emirates and Turkmenistan, the UAE Minister of Energy Dha'en Al Hamili and the Turkmen Minister of Energy and Industry Gurbannur Annaveliev discussed ways to tap mutually-beneficial investment opportunities in the oil and gas sector as well as other energy sources, *Khaleej Times Online* reported. The two countries discussed the possibility of joint ventures in the energy and petrochemical industries to implement a general statement to increase cooperation.

Energy Minister Hamili said that such projects would enhance the "strategic partnership" that the UAE president would like to encourage, and that the UAE has a great deal of experience in partnering with international oil and gas companies. Hamili briefed his Turkmen counterpart on existing petrochemical projects and future projects to generate power and for the electricity grid among the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Turkmen Energy and Industry Minister Annaveliev expressed interest in UAE's massive growth and its hydrocarbon projects, hoping to benefit from its experience.



## **b. UAE President Makes \$50 Million Gift to Turkmenistan**

**Original title:** UAE President Makes \$50 Million Gift to Turkmenistan. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project

**Source:** [turkmenistan.ru/08/26/07](http://turkmenistan.ru/08/26/07)

**Full version:** [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10875&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10875&type=event&sort=date_desc)

**Synopsis:** During his two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates August 26-27, UAE President Shaikh Khalifa made a gift of \$50 million to Turkmenistan. He specified that the funds were to be used for supporting an existing cultural center in Ashgabat and a sanatorium in Archman.

## **c. Turkmen President Discusses Oil Exploration with British Petroleum**

**Original title:** BP Exploration and Production CEO Confirms Company's Readiness to Establish Close Business Relations With Turkmenistan. Synopsis prepared by OSI Turkmenistan Project.

**Source:** [turkmenistan.ru/08/24/07](http://turkmenistan.ru/08/24/07)

**Full version:** [http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=10852&type=event&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=10852&type=event&sort=date_desc)

**Synopsis:** President Berdymukhamedov received Andy Inglis, chief executive of British Petroleum Exploration and Production, [turkmenistan.ru](http://turkmenistan.ru) reported. Inglis confirmed BP's interest in establishing close business ties, and briefed the president on BP's activities in onshore and offshore oil extraction.

The Turkmen leader indicated Turkmenistan is open for partnership based on mutual benefit and invited BP to participate in the construction of the national tourism zone in the city of Turkmenbashi, and to build recreational facilities for its staff on the Caspian shore. The need for training of skilled specialists in Turkmenistan was discussed, and Inglis offered to familiarize Turkmen specialists with the operations of his company in other countries, including on the Caspian Sea shelf.

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*Unless otherwise indicated, all translations have been prepared by OSI's Turkmenistan Project.*

### About the Turkmenistan Project

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